

### **Amendments to the Claims**

1-25. Cancelled.

26. (Currently Amended) A method for the production of fine battery particles, comprising the steps of:

- a) forming a liquid comprising precursors to a battery compound;
- b) generating an aerosol of droplets from said liquid using a spray nozzle atomizer; and
- c) pyrolyzing said droplets to remove liquid therefrom and at least partially react said precursors to form intermediate precursor particles; and
- d) heating said intermediate precursor particles to form a powder batch of battery particles.

27. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 26, wherein said pyrolyzing step comprises passing said droplets through a heating zone having a reaction temperature of from about 500°C to about 1000°C in an oxygen-containing gas.

28. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 26, wherein said liquid is a solution comprising a lithium metal precursor.

29. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 26, wherein said liquid is a solution comprising lithium nitrate.

30-31. (Cancelled)

32. (New) A method as recited in Claim 26, wherein said battery particles have an average particle size of from about 1  $\mu\text{m}$  to about 5  $\mu\text{m}$ .

33. (New) A method as recited in Claim 26, wherein said liquid is a solution comprising manganese nitrate.

34. (New) A method as recited in Claim 26, wherein said battery particles comprise  $\text{LiMn}_2\text{O}_4$ .

35. (New) A method as recited in Claim 26, wherein said battery particles comprise  $\text{LiCoO}_2$ .

36. (New) A method as recited in Claim 26, wherein said battery particles comprise  $\text{LiNiO}_2$ .